

# RSS - Almost Ready for Prime Time!

Stephen Rahn

Kennesaw State University

Educational Technology Training Center

[sbrahn@gmail.com](mailto:sbrahn@gmail.com)

<http://stephen.ksuettc.org>

# Let's make sure we know what RSS is

- RSS stands for “Really Simple Syndication”
- RSS consists of **Feeds**(content you want to read) and an **Aggregator** (a program or site that gathers your feeds for you).
- Feeds are delivered to your aggregator so you don't have to check multiple sites for the content you want to read.

# What are the best aggregators?

- I prefer a (free) web-based aggregator such as:
  - Google Reader
  - Bloglines
  - NewsGator Online
  - Here is a [good comparison](#) of all 3
- There are some stand-alone products as well:
  - FeedDemon (Windows)
  - NetNewsWire (Mac)
- Here is the most comprehensive list of aggregators I've seen:
  - <http://www.newsonfeeds.com/faq/aggregators>

# Where can I get feeds?

- Most major news sites have them now.
- Almost every blog has them.
- Some online retailers have them.
- Many governmental resources now have them.
- Browse around at Technorati
  - <http://technorati.com>

# How do I know if a site has an available feed?

- Look for something like this on the page:



- Simply copy the link for the feed into your aggregator.
- Your aggregator will allow you to put the feed into a category or folder.
- Lots more here!
  - <http://www.rss-specifications.com>

# Can you show me how?

- How about a little video?
  - <http://www.blip.tv/file/205570>
- Or how about MORE videos?
  - <http://rssvideos.blogspot.com>
- And here is a list of GREAT resources.
  - <http://mashable.com/2007/06/11/rss-toolbox>

# What if a page doesn't have a feed?

- No problem! (In most cases)
- You can use a “scraper” site or program that will convert content into a feed for you.
  - <http://page2rss.com>

# How can I create my own feeds?

- Any blog service will have built-in feeds.
- If you want to make them yourself, you can use a program called FeedForAll.
  - <http://www.feedforall.com>
- Or you could use an online service to create them for you.
  - <http://www.feedxs.com>
  - [http://fedafi.com/feed\\_maker.php](http://fedafi.com/feed_maker.php)
  - <http://www.regnews.com>

# How can I keep track how many people are reading my feed?

- Feedburner allows you to do this.
  - <http://www.feedburner.com>
- Feedburner was recently purchased by Google.

# What is the popularity level of RSS?

- It's difficult to say, but we know it's gaining in popularity. Almost every day we hear about a new site which offers feeds.
- It's still perceived as "geeky" by many people, and that has slowed its adoption.

# Have any studies been done on RSS?

- Yes! Here is one from the University of Maryland.
  - <http://tinyurl.com/2zj2sd>
- And another from Slashdot
  - <http://tinyurl.com/3a72so>
- Here's one from Yahoo from 2005
  - [http://publisher.yahoo.com/rss/RSS\\_whitePaper1004.pdf](http://publisher.yahoo.com/rss/RSS_whitePaper1004.pdf)
- And one more from last September
  - <http://www.knowledgestorm.com/search/viewabstract/84548>

# So what are some newer uses?

- Scholarly searches through EBSCO
  - <http://galileo.usg.edu>
- Keep track of your website statistics
  - <http://getclicky.com>
- Get weather alerts
  - <http://weather.gov>
- User RSS feeds in Moodle
  - <http://moodle.ksuettc.org>

# So what are some newer uses?

- Keep track of items at Amazon.com
  - <http://www.amazon.com/gp/tagging/rss-help.html>
- Schools can help students and parents keep up with homework
  - <http://tinyurl.com/2xy8cj>
- Read RSS feeds from your Nintendo Wii
  - <http://www.google.com/reader/view/?ui=wii>

# So what are some newer uses?

- Add feeds to your personalized home page.
  - <http://www.pageflakes.com>
  - <http://www.netvibes.com>
  - <http://www.google.com/ig>
  - <http://www.protopage.com>
  - <http://my.yahoo.com>

# So what are some newer uses?

- Keep track of del.icio.us tags
  - <http://del.icio.us/podcast>
- Stay up to date with a Google Group
  - <http://groups.google.com>
- Keep track of a collaborative Wiki
  - <http://www.wikispaces.com>
  - <http://pbwiki.com>
  - <http://www.wetpaint.com>

# So what are some newer uses?

- Library feeds from Wisconsin
  - <http://tinyurl.com/3dxxlx5>
- Subscribe to photo streams
  - <http://flickr.com>
  - <http://zoomr.com>
    - <http://tinyurl.com/35nu85>
  - <http://picasaweb.google.com>
- Make your podcasts more meaningful.
  - <http://tinyurl.com/3ycp3u>